Halton Police seek community grant support

The Halton Regional Police Service is requesting public support in voting for a community grant application to fund a radio tracking system designed to help return missing persons with autism, dementia disorders, and Down's Syndrome quickly and safely to their loved ones – often in as little as 30 to 45 minutes.

"The frequency of vulnerable people who wander away from their home or family and become confused or lost, occurs more often than people may realize" said Deputy Chief Bob Percy, explaining that the resulting impact on police resources in undertaking a coordinated search can quickly become a significant issue.

"This system would provide an effective response to these situations, reduce the resource requirements, greatly reduce the stress level on family members and most importantly, potentially save a life," Percy said.

Currently Peel, York and Essex O.P.P. are the only police services in Canada with this system. It is an expensive undertaking which requires a collaborative effort and creative funding options. Through the Aviva Community Fund community grant application, the Service is optimistic that with the community's support, they can enhance the process for the good of all involved.

However, in order to make this work, the police need your help. If "Project Safe Return" receives enough votes on the Aviva Community Fund website, this project will be funded by one of Aviva's community grants.

With a large population of those in the vulnerable sector, this system would make a huge difference in the lives of countless families, many of whom cannot afford expensive technology to help keep their loved ones safe, Percy said.

Between now and November 26, the police are hoping to receive 15,000 votes for Project Safe Return to help get this project funded. This is where community support is vital – public votes are urgently needed.

In order to vote for Project Safe Return, people will need to register on the community fund website at www.avivacommunityfund.org/users/

registration. Participants will be asked to provide their email address, and select a password and screen name. They will then receive a confirmation email to complete their registration. When they click on the link provided, they will need to re-enter their email and password.

Once registration is complete, to vote for Project Safe Return they can enter the following URL: www.avivacommunityfund.org/ideas/acf9399 or do a search for code "acf9399" in the search



CURVES CLOSES: Acton's Barb Petter is upset and annoyed that the Acton Curves has closed, forcing members to drive to Georgetown to an affiliated Curves. She has joined the Milton Curves, because she doesn't want to give business to the Georgetown Curves, owned by the franchise who owned the Acton location that closed yesterday (Wednesday). - Frances Niblock photo

urves Acton closed

Acton, declining membership forced the owner of the Curves franchise in the Sobeys plaza to close yesterday (Wednesday) leaving many members unhappy with the prospect of driving to the Georgetown Curves to exercise.

Georgetown and Acton Curves manager Annette Ryan said they tried to "not play this up too much," because they didn't want to "upset people", but that marketing strategy clearly didn't work with some members, including Chris, who did not want to give her last name.

"The closure is a big blow to the health of women in Acton," Chris said on Friday, adding she will probably join the Guelph Curves, because it

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who has both the Acton and Georgetown Curves franchises.

"I don't want to give him my money. So many of those women (in Acton) don't drive and they won't be walking to Georgetown," she said on Friday.

Curves member Barb Petter said she is so "annoyed" with how the Acton closure was handled – with little notice and out of the blue – that she intends to go to the Milton Curves and not give her business to the Georgetown franchise.

"Apparently, it takes less time to get to the Georgetown Curves, but on principle, I'm not going there," Petter said, adding she works out at Curves

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After seven years in is not owned by the man two or three times a week, and found the Acton staff "very warm, helpful and friendly."

The Georgetown Curves franchise holder, who would only identify himself as Andy, said the Acton closure was a matter of dollars and cents.

"I've been losing money for 12 months, trying to provide a service to the people of Acton, and I can't afford to keep losing money," Andy said on Monday, adding implementation of the HST in July cost them 10 per cent of their membership, and was the "final straw."

He said Acton membership has dropped to approximately 150 members, down from a high of 300 several years ago. Staff said that approximately 25 of those members had transferred to Georgetown.

"This was not an easy decision – I hoped for a turn around...this is a sad day for us – we are going to miss Acton, he said.

Andy owns 10 Curves franchises across Ontario and said the recession forced him to close and sell several Curves locations in the Windsor area.

Acton members who transfer to Georgetown have been offered a monthly discount. The average Curves member pays approximately \$50 per month for unlimited use of the circuit equipment. Two Acton Curves employees will transfer to Georgetown, but three Acton staffers lost their jobs.

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